



Community Agenda 2011

1. Improve Conditions at the Holding Center

Erie County should improve conditions at the Holding Center by

- a. improving the screening and treatment of inmates with mental health or substance abuse problems;
- b. appointing true community representatives, including inmate advocates, to the Community Advisory Board (CAB) for the Holding Center and using the CAB to make meaningful changes.

2. Ensure Language Access for City and County Residents

The City of Buffalo and Erie County should form Limited English Proficiency plans to comply with Title VI and ensure that free interpreting and translation are widely available and that people with limited English proficiency get equal access to government programs and services.

3. Promote Neighborhood Health through Community Health Workers

The City of Buffalo, Erie County, and New York State should join to

- a. launch concentrated initiatives in two target communities to focus existing that address social determinants of health such as housing, education, violence prevention, built environment, and health and social services;
- b. create additional resources for concentrated and holistic approaches to individual and community level well-being.

Health should be addressed as a quality of life issue, with Community Health Workers who are of and from the target neighborhoods informing and implementing this process.

4. Establish and Promote Benefit Corporations

New York State should pass A11498B to authorize benefit corporations, which work on the triple bottom line of environmental sustainability, social benefits, and monetary profit. State and local economic development entities, such as IDAs and urban renewal authorities, should promote benefit corporations with their subsidies and programs.

5. Reform Erie County Cultural Funding

Erie County, in conjunction with arts and cultural organizations, should develop a citizen-led cultural plan for the Greater Buffalo region that promotes broader economic development needs and opportunities and should establish an ongoing citizen-led process for the distribution of the public's annual arts, cultural and library funding through the County.

6. Create a Tonawanda Air Pilot Project

DEC and EPA should implement a pilot program in Tonawanda working with companies to invest in technology which would reduce air emissions.

7. Reform New York State's Subsidy Programs

New York State should reform its subsidy programs, including Industrial Development Agencies, to ensure that economic development dollars are spent wisely and with maximum community input. Reform legislation should include job quality standards (living and prevailing wages), local hiring, green building requirements, anti-pirating and recapture mechanisms, and anti-sprawl provisions. The six IDAs in Erie County should be merged into one countywide authority.

8. Require a Community Benefit Agreement for Erie Canal Redevelopment

The Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation should sign a community benefit agreement for Canal Side requiring:

- a. an inclusive community process to shape the project,
- b. quality jobs,
- c. environmentally friendly building and operations,
- d. locally-owned and minority-and-women-owned businesses,
- e. mixed income housing, and
- f. a building and site design appropriate to the location.

9. Fully Implement Complete Street Laws in the City and County

The City of Buffalo and Erie County should develop transparent and public processes to institutionalize their Complete Streets Ordinances – requiring the accommodation of pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users and green infrastructure – in all public works projects:

- a. move policy to procedure by creating and funding a Complete Streets Coordinator position to ensure the implementation and institutionalization of Complete Streets; and
- b. develop design guidelines and specifications to implement Complete Streets standards.

10. Build a Better, More Just Peace Bridge Project

- a. No Environmental Impact Statement should be approved by the Public Bridge Authority (PBA), Common Council, NYS Department of Transportation or Federal Highway Authority, that fails to:
 - i. Address the crisis of respiratory illness on Buffalo's West Side and fully examine the localized effects of the bridge through the development of a health impact study for the residents of the surrounding neighborhoods including effects during proposed construction;
 - ii. Avoid further encroachment and begin restoration of the surrounding historic neighborhoods and Front Park;
 - iii. Capitalize on opportunities for true economic development potential of a regional bi-national trade and transportation system for Western New York including a single entity to manage all Buffalo-Niagara crossings starting with revenue sharing among existing Authorities.
- b. Governor Cuomo and Attorney General Schniederman should appoint representatives to the PBA that adequately represent the WNY community's concerns and will pursue these goals

11. Green Buffalo by Design

The City of Buffalo should ensure that the Buffalo Green Code and land use plan meet high levels of environmental stewardship and equity:

- a. establish firm environmental justice principles in land use and infrastructure distribution;
- b. ensure future development follows smart growth principles and encourages use of mass transit, walking and biking;
- c. ensure opportunities for green infrastructure reuse and agricultural production.

12. Address Regional Vacancy Crisis

- a. New York State should enact land bank enabling legislation to streamline vacant property reclamation, maintenance and disposition;
- b. New York State should increase its commitment to Sustainable Neighborhoods program to spur revitalization in target communities;
- c. the City of Buffalo and the State should fund a vacant lot management program to create employment opportunities and community assets;
- d. the City should commit to clear and predictable processes for community access to City owned vacant properties.

13. Lead in Sustainable Neighborhood Development

New York State should advance the Green and Healthy Homes and Sustainable Communities movements by reforming the multiple weatherization programs administered by the Public Service Commission, NYS Housing and Community Renewal and NYSERDA to ensure that they maximize the number of homes weatherized and create green jobs with living wages that are accessible to low-income people.